Poverty alleviation schemes in the country

* 324. Prof. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total percentage of people living below poverty line in the country;

(b) the details of the schemes formulated and being implemented by the Government for alleviate poverty in the country; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) The Planning Commission estimates poverty at national and state level from the large sample surveys on household consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. Based on the latest such survey conducted in 1999-2000 (NSSO 55th Round), the percentage of people living below poverty line in the country is estimated to be 26.1% in 1999-2000.

(b) and (c) Government has introduced a number of programmes/ schemes from time to time to improve the conditions of the people living below the poverty line. These are *inter-alia* as follows:

Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)—The SGSY was launched in April, 1999 following the restructuring of the erstwhile Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and its allied programmes along with Million Wells Scheme (MWS). The objective of the SGSY is to bring the assisted poor families (Swarozgaris) above the poverty line by organizing them into Self Help Groups (SHGs) through the process of social mobilization, their training and capacity building and provision of income generating assets through a mix of Bank credit and Government subsidy.

Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)—This scheme announced by the Prime Minister on 15.8.2001 was launched in September 2001. The schemes of Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) and Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) have been merged under this programme w.e.f. 1.4.2002. The primary objective of the scheme is to provide additional wage employment in all rural areas and thereby provide food security and improve nutritional levels. The scondary

objective is the creation of durable community, social and economic assets and infrastructural development in rural areas. The SGRY is open to all rural poor who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manuaf and unskilled work in and around the village/habitat.

Rural Housing—Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)—The composite multi pronged strategy for housing has been operationalised w.e.f. 1999-2000. The Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) is the major scheme for construction of houses to be given to the poor, free of cost. It has an additional component, namely, conversion of unserviceable kutcha houses to semi pucca houses.

Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)— SJSRY is a Poverty Alleviation Programme for the urban areas which seeks to provide gainful employment to the urban unemployed or under-employed poor through encouraging the setting up of self-employment ventures or provision of wage employment.

Widening of Jalandhar-Pathankot Road

325. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work of widening the Jalandhar-Pathankot section of the National Highway has been progressing on a very slow speed as a result of which users of the highway have to face immense inconvenience;

(b) if so, when did the work start and the reasons for delay in completing the work; and

(c) the action proposed to expedite the work and by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI PON. RADHAKRISHNAN): (a) to (c) Jalandhar-Pathankot section of National Highways—1A is a part of North-South corridor to be four laned under the National Highways Development Project by December, 2007. Four laning in nearly 22 km of this section had started in August 2001 and is now targeted for completion by March 2004. In the balance length, the work is targeted to be completed by December, 2007. The project is not lagging behind the target of four laning of the entire section, by December, 2007.